Community Covenant

SURREY CIVILIAN-MILITARY PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2015, Farnham Reserve Centre, Farnham, GU9 9QB.

Present:

Mr David Munro	Chairman of Surrey County Council
Michael Cannon	Community Integration Task Group
Brigadier Paul Evans DL	Recognise and Remember Task Group
Lt-Col Chris Booth	SERFCA
Col Tony Ward DL	Lieutenancy
Sandra Fruish	Royal British Legion
Councillor John Kingsbury	St Johns and Hook Heath
Col Bob Crawley	ssafa
Mr David Ivison	Surrey County Council
Debbie Goldsmith	Garrison Representative
Major Jodie Kennedy-Smith	11 Infantry Brigade – Transition
Rev Roland Olliff	Guildford Diocese
Jeff Harris	Police and Crime Commissioner
Karen Whelan	Surrey Heath Borough Council
Mrs Sally Ann B Marks	Vice-Chairman of Surrey County Council
Canon Peter Bruinvels	SCC Civilian Military Liaison Advisor
Karen Simmonds	Surrey County Council Public Health
Mark Scarborough	Surrey County Council Area Education Officer
James Painter	Surrey County Council Community Partnership Manager
Sarah Goodman	Surrey County Council (Clerk)

Apologies:

Col Andrew Barr	11 Infantry Brigade
Col Patrick Crowley	SERFCA
Dame Sarah Goad	Lord-Lieutenant
Brigadier Andrew Hughes	11 Infantry Brigade
Susie Kemp	Assistant Chief Executive, Surrey County Council
Major Carol Miller	ATC Pirbright
Victoria Paterson	11 Infantry Brigade
Louise Punter	Surrey Chambers of Commerce

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES [Item 1]

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Thanks were expressed to Keith Sargent (ssafa) and Mark Chester (Diocese of Guildford) for all their input to the work of the Board, and their successors, Bob Crawley (ssafa) and Rev Roland Olliff (Diocese of Guildford) were welcomed onto the Board. The Chairman agreed to write formally to Mark and Keith expressing the Board's thanks. **ACTION: DM**

Apologies were received from Susie Kemp, Col Andrew Barr (Major Jodie Kennedy-Smith representing), Victoria Paterson, Louise Punter, Col Patrick Crowley (Lt-Col Booth representing) and Major Carol Miller (Debbie Goldsmith representing).

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING [Item 2]

The minutes of the last meeting held on 16 October 2014 were approved. It was noted that the Muslim Burial Ground was now due to open in the autumn.

Matters arising:

- Following the National Community Covenant Conference, the issue of Early Years Pupil Premium for service children and FEET was raised with the Head of the Children's Education Advisory Service. The Department of Children and Young People within the MOD and the DfE meet quarterly to discuss educational issues affecting service children. They are due to meet again after Easter where this will be raised. Any update provided following this meeting will be provided to the Community Integration Task Group. **ACTION: PB**
- An update on Headley Court was provided. It is due to close in 2018, and is currently at about 80% occupancy. Various organisations have approached the Trustees regarding the use of the site after the Military move out. The Board will be kept updated on any developments. **ACTION: PB**
- Beech Grove Play Area had its very successful official opening on 23 March 2015.

3 KEY SCMPB LINKS [Item 3]

- **Links with Surrey MPs**

At the last meeting of the Surrey Military Appeals Committee, there was a discussion about links between the Surrey MP's and the armed forces community. It was agreed that a briefing would be prepared for the Surrey MPs and their officers/case workers setting out some of the current issues facing the armed forces community and sign posting them to relevant organisations. **ACTION: SG/PB**

- **Links with the LEPs including Recruitment of Reservists**

High level meetings have now been held with SCMPB, the Military and Enterprise M3 and Coast to Capital. Col Barr represents 11 Brigade on Enterprise M3, and Coast to Capital is considering military representation on their Board.

- **Corporate Covenant**

Peter Bruinvels updated the Board on the discussions he is having with local authorities regarding links to businesses in their area and taking forward the Corporate Covenant. Work is progressing in Woking, Guildford, Mole Valley, Epsom and Ewell and Elmbridge. Cllr Kingsbury explained that Woking held a briefing for local businesses on 4 February 2015. This is now being followed up with 1-1 meetings with businesses and with the hope of hold a signing ceremony in Woking after the elections. Woking Borough Council and Thameswey Group of Companies have resolved to sign the Corporate Covenant at this event.

BAE Systems has revised their Corporate Covenant and re-signed at an event in Portsmouth, which was attended by the Minister of Reserves. Paul Evans reiterated that he was happy to act as an advocate to other companies interested in signing the Corporate Covenant.

The issue of reservists and links with businesses was discussed. It was noted that a key way into the businesses are through the Business Breakfast meetings that the district and boroughs tend to host, in addition to the events hosted by the Chambers. This would be fed back to relevant officers within 11 Brigade and SaBRE. **ACTION: JKS/SG/PB**

There was also discussion of a stand alone advertisement package for recruitment of reservists, and whether this is something that could be made available for these business briefings as well as other appropriate meetings. Chris Booth mentioned that one has been produced. The Board would welcome this being played at the next Board meeting, and the Task Group Chairman may appreciate seeing it before then if this is possible. **ACTION: SG/PB/CB**

4 TASK GROUP UPDATE [Item 4]

Recognise and Remember Task Group

The Chairman of the Task Group, Brigadier Paul Evans gave the following update:

- The last meeting was held at ATC Pirbright and the group were invited to watch a Passing Out Parade of both Regulars and Reservists.
- Current focus is on developing a forward plan and establishing a role for the Armed Forces Champions.
- There are two major VC events in Surrey on 25 April and 26 April in Woking and Surrey Heath respectively.
- The War Memorial Amelioration Project is going well. Board members noted that Memorial Halls were within the remit of the project.
- Promoting ‘I want to book a soldier’, but uptake is slow and officers are looking at how to increase it.

Peter Bruinvels then took members through the full programme for National Armed Forces Day in Guildford and the other events leading up to it, including the official launch of Armed Forces Week at The Guildhall on Monday 22 June 2015. The programme for the full week was discussed, and it was noted that the Board would consider how best to have a presence on the day. **ACTION: DM/JP/PB/SG**

Community Integration Task Group

The Chairman of the Task Group, Michael Cannon updated that the Group has had two meetings and consolidated the action plans from the former Transition Task Group and Armed Forces Forum. Four working sub-groups have been established as set out below. A few of the actions being taken forward are noted. In addition the group has been monitoring the relaunched web pages and the @SurreyMilitary twitter feed. Board members were asked to further promote these, and send any events for the military calendar to armedforces@surreycc.gov.uk. **ACTION: ALL**

Housing:

- Ensuring the armed forces community has the same access to housing and advice as any other citizen. Looking at standard data collection, reviewing housing websites etc
- Increased links to Joint Services Housing Advice Office (JSHAO)

Employment and skills

- Ensuring support to service leavers and spouses is clear through improved marketing and communications, and providing ongoing support to service families and reservists
- Promoting opportunities for developing learning and skills, eg adult learners events.

Health, Wellbeing and Welfare

- The group is amalgamating the work of the previous two task groups, and is looking at numbers of the armed forces community using either NHS or DMS (Defence Medical Services) facilities.

Education:

- Promoting the understanding of the admissions process to military families and maintaining good communication with 11 Brigade to secure early information for pupil place planning.
- Promoting greater understanding of the needs of service children.
- Exploring a link between the military and the new University Technical College in Guildford.

Mark Scarborough, Area Education Officer for Surrey County Council with the Military lead gave a further update:

- Service Pupil Premium (SPP) – schools are not held to account for the use of this funding in the same way as they are for the Pupil Premium. This will be raised with OFSTED and the appropriate schools.
- As a result from a request from schools, and following best practice from Hampshire, a newsletter has been produced and sent to all Surrey schools with service children. This includes ideas for the use of the SPP.
- Admissions are working closely with 11 Brigade. Changes to the School Admissions Code was circulated – the earliest that changes could come into effect is September 2017. However, at the moment there are not enough service children coming through Surrey for a countywide change to the Admissions Code. A request was made to find out the issues service families raised with the Admissions Team. **ACTION: MS**

During discussion it was noted that:

- The Army Families Foundations report that the SPP, school places and continuity of education are all key issues for service families.
- SPP is not available for the children of Reservists.

The Chairman requested a further update on education issues at the next Board meeting in October. **ACTION: SG/MS**

5 WORK WITH THE DISTRICT AND BOROUGH COUNCILS [Item 5]

11 Brigade Task Force Commanders

Major Jodie Kennedy-Smith gave an update on the role of the Task Force Commanders over the next three years. Task Force Commanders will engage at the borough level, and 11 Brigade will continue to engage at the County level.

A Brigade level partnership conference will be organised in May to launch the Firm Base campaign and role of Task Force Commanders. Board members requested that the date for this Conference be moved to after the elections. The Task Force Commanders will be asked report back to Brigade in July on their discussions locally. This will be followed by a further regional conference in the Autumn for County Council's setting out the key issues to be addressed and providing an opportunity to share best practice. **ACTION: JKS**

Armed Forces Champions

A meeting has been set up for 31 March to draft a job description for Armed Forces Champions. Surrey Leaders will be asked to nominate Champions for their authority. **ACTION: JK/SG/PB**

6 UPDATES [Item 6]

Community Covenant Grant Funding

The update paper was noted. It was understood that up to £2M would be ring fenced for the Community Covenant. As soon as further information was available, Board members and Armed Forces Champions would be updated. **ACTION: SG/VP**

Case studies on the use of the Covenant grant (as well as the work of the Board) could be produced and sent to the RBL for inclusion in future editions of their Covenant booklet. **ACTION: SG/PB/SF**

An update on the Budget 2015 in relation to the Covenant was tabled. Officers would explore some of these funding opportunities as appropriate. **ACTION: PB/JP/SG**

SCMPB Communications

The update paper was noted. Board members were encouraged to promote links to the armed forces website (www.surreycc.gov.uk/armedforces) and Twitter (@SurreyMilitary).

Community Covenant Conferences

The Chairman gave a brief update on the National Community Covenant Conference in Bristol, and Board Members noted the date of the Surrey conference on 10 November 2015 at RLC Deepcut. The Surrey conference would be focussed on front line staff, and it was suggested it may be appropriate for one of the Surrey Armed Forces Champions to speak at the event.

7 VIDEO PRESENTATION - THE VIEWS OF SERVICE CHILDREN [Item 7]

Board members viewed the video.

8 PRESENTATION ON THE ROLE OF 3RD BATTALION THE PRINCESS OF WALES'S ROYAL REGIMENT [Item 8]

Major Gerry Long MBE gave an excellent presentation on the role of 3PWRR.

The Chairman thanked Major Long for the presentation and for hosting the meeting.

9 AOB [Item 9]

- Board Members gave suggestions to increase the number of Twitter followers.
- The issue of pension fraud was raised with the view of raising awareness amongst the Armed Forces community. Trading Standards would be asked for advice and this would be circulated. **ACTION: SG**
- Social media awareness and Cyber Safe Surrey was raised with a view to raising awareness amongst military families. This would be taken forward outside the meeting. **ACTION: JH/MS/SG/PB**

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 10]

The next meeting will be held at 2pm on Thursday 15 October 2015. The venue is still to be confirmed.

Meeting ended at: 4.15 pm

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Chairman